

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A multimedia direct access storage device and a method for transferring source program signals representative of a compressed digital multimedia program to and from the direct access storage device are disclosed.

A multimedia program is transmitted from a multimedia server as a custom ordered series of discrete program segments and received by the multimedia direct access storage device, which buffers the compressed program segments for subsequent presentation on a local display monitor. The multimedia direct access storage device is preferably incorporated as a component of a local set-top control system for buffering a predetermined number of compressed program segments received from the multimedia server, some of which may be non-sequentially ordered and others of which may be sequentially ordered. A novel formatting methodology provides for the sequential presentation of the program segments asynchronously distributed on one or more data storage disks disposed in the direct access storage device. A user-definable presentation control window for performing local VCR-type presentation control functions for the portion of a multimedia program buffered in the direct access storage device is also provided through the novel formatting methodology. The novel formatting methodology also provides concurrent presentation and buffering of program segments received from the multimedia server for on-demand viewing of a selected multimedia program.